

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 056183
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INFO OCT-01 INR-10 ISO-00 NEA-10 SS-15 SSO-00 SP-02
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FOR ATHERTON, USDEL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PORG, IS, UNSC

SUBJECT: WEST BANK SOVEREIGNTY

1. HISTORICAL RECORD IS FAIRLY BARREN OF REMARKS IN EARLY FIFTIES IN RESPONSE TO JORDAN'S ASSERTION OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER WEST BANK. (HISTORICAL OFFICE HAS RESEARCHED THIS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.) PUBLIC RECORD CONTAINS ONLY FOLLOWING STATEMENT, MADE BY SECRETARY OF STATE ACHESON DURING PRESS BRIEFING ON APRIL 26, 1950: "THE ELECTIONS WHICH WERE HELD ON THE 11TH WERE ON THE BASIS OF THE INCORPORATION OF ARAB PALESTINE INTO THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM. THOSE ELECTIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE AND THIS ACTION OF THE PARLIAMENT WILL BE TO RATIFY THAT DECISION. NOW, OUR AMERICAN ATTITUDE IS THAT NORMALLY WE HAVE NO OBJECTION WHATEVER TO THE UNION OF PEOPLES MUTUALLY DESIROUS OF THIS NEW RELATIONSHIP." HE ADDED THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS STUDYING THE BEARING OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PAGE 02 STATE 056183

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2. BACKGROUND OF THIS AMBIGUOUS STANCE IS FOLLOWING, GLEANED IN PART FROM RECORD OF NEGOTIATIONS NOW PUBLISHED IN 1948 AND 1949 VOLUMES OF FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES AND FROM CLEARED BUT NOT YET PUBLISHED 1950 VOLUME.

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PAGE 03 STATE 056183

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-- BERNADOTTE'S PROGRESS REPORT, SIGNED ON SEPT. 16, 1948, (HIS LAST REPORT) REFLECTED THE U.S.-U.K. IDEA:

"THE DISPOSITION OF THE TERRITORY OF PALESTINE NOT INCLUDED WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE JEWISH STATE SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE ARAB STATES IN FULL CONSULTATION WITH THE ARAB INHABITANTS OF PALESTINE, WITH THE RECOMMENDATION, HOWEVER, THAT IN VIEW OF THE HISTORICAL CONNEXION AND COMMON INTERESTS OF TRANSJORDAN AND PALESTINE, THERE WOULD BE COMPELLING REASONS FOR MERGING THE ARAB TERRITORY OF PALESTINE WITH THE TERRITORY OF TRANSJORDAN, SUBJECT TO SUCH FRONTIER RECTIFICATIONS REGARDING OTHER ARAB STATES AS MAY BE FOUND PRACTICABLE AND DESIRABLE."

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PAGE 04 STATE 056183

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PAGE 05 STATE 056183

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-- DURING INFORMAL MEETING WITH PALESTINE CONCILIATION COMMISSION (PCC) ON FEBRUARY 8, 1949, ISRAELI FONMIN SERTOK EXPLAINED "THAT ISRAEL HAD ACCEPTED 1947 PARTITION ON BASIS ARAB PALESTINE WOULD BECOME INDEPENDENT STATE. IF IT NOW BECAME PART OF TRANSJORDAN, SITUATION WAS RADICALLY ALTERED AND ISRAEL'S PREVIOUS ACCEPTANCE NO LONGER VALID AND ITS RESULT WOULD BE DIFFERENT. ISRAEL BELIEVES THERE SHOULD BE RECTIFICATION OF PRESENT LINES IN PALESTINE BUT DID NOT PRESS FOR AN INCREASE IN TOTAL AREA."

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PAGE 06 STATE 056183

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-- IN MAY 17, 1949 TELEGRAM FROM LAUSANNE, US PCC REP REPORTED PCC DISCUSSION WITH ISRAEL DELEGATION: "EYTAN REMARKED RE BOUNDARIES THAT PARTITION WAS BASED ON INDEPENDENT STATES IN PALESTINE, BUT (HE) DID NOT MENTION ECONOMIC UNION OR INTERNATIONALIZATION OF JERUSALEM. ARABS TRIED TO PREVENT BUT FAILED AS JEWISH STATE WAS ESTABLISHED AND ARAB WAS NOT. ON NOVEMBER 29, GA DID NOT DIVIDE PALESTINE BETWEEN JEWS AND ARAB STATES, BUT BETWEEN JEWS AND ARABS OF PALESTINE. ARAB STATES HAVE NO CLAIM WHATSOEVER

ON PALESTINE. ARAB STATES ARE IN TEMPORARY MILITARY OCCUPATION OF PALESTINE. FIRST TASK OF GENERAL COMMITTEE IS TO FACE THIS SITUATION OF UNLAWFUL MILITARY OCCUPATION. ISRAELI DELEGATION WILL INSIST ON WITHDRAWAL OF ALL ARAB STATES. PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION SHOULD BE OBSERVED FOR ARAB PALESTINE. FUTURE OF ARAB PALESTINE SHOULD BE LEFT TO ITS INHABITANTS.

-- ON MAY 28, 1949, ISRAEL TOLD PCC THAT "ISRAEL WOULD ACCEPT PRESENT ARMISTICE LINE AS BOUNDARY WHETHER CENTRAL PALESTINE WAS GOVERNED BY TRANSJORDAN OR INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY. ISRAEL HAD NO AMBITIONS IN CENTRAL PALESTINE. ISRAEL PLANNED TO DISCUSS WITH FINAL ESTABLISHED AUTHORITY IN CENTRAL PALESTINE. ISRAELI ATTITUDE RE MODIFICATIONS WILL CHANGE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHARACTER OF GOVERNING AUTHORITY, I.E., WHETHER TRANSJORDAN, INDEPENDENT STATE, OR OTHER AUTHORITY. ISRAEL DID NOT WISH TO ADVANCE SUGGESTIONS RE ITS DISPOSITION. ISRAEL WISHED GIVE ALL INTER-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 07 STATE 056183

ESTED INCLUDING ARAB STATES, ARAB INHABITANTS AND REFUGEES OPPORTUNITY TO DECIDE RE FUTURE STATUS OF CENTRAL PALESTINE.

-- IN REMARKS TO PCC ON JUNE 9, EYTAN SAID THAT ISRAEL ACCEPTED MAY 12 PROTOCOL AS BASIS FOR DISCUSSION. ISRAELI PRINCIPLE IS GA PRINCIPLE OF MUTUAL ADJUSTMENT OF BORDERS TO COMMON ADVANTAGE OF EACH PARTY BY FREE NEGOTIATION. ISRAEL CANNOT ACCEPT "PURELY ARBITRARY MATHEMATICAL PROPORTION OR FORMULA." PARTITION RESOLUTIONS OF NOVEMBER 29 ARE NOT SACROSANCT. ISRAEL IS NOT BOUND TO ADHERE. PARTITION WAS BASED ON PEACEFUL IMPLEMENTATION. WAR RESULTS. ONLY JEWISH STATE APPEARED. ARAB STATE DID NOT. ARABS ARE, HOWEVER, ENTITLED TO STATE. ISRAEL CANNOT AGREE THAT BECAUSE ARABS FAILED TO ESTABLISH STATE OTHER ARAB STATES ARE ENTITLED TO TERRITORY.....IF THERE WERE ARAB STATE ISRAEL'S TERRITORIAL POSITION WOULD NOW BE DIFFERENT. ISRAEL IS PREPARED, HOWEVER, TO DISCUSS ITS FRONTIERS WITH EACH OF ITS PRESENT NEIGHBORS.

-- ON OCTOBER 14, 1949, IN RESPONSE TO A BRITISH REQUEST FOR VIEWS REGARDING ASKING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO DIRECT THE PALESTINE CONCILIATION COMMISSION TO BRING ABOUT INCORPORATION OF ARAB PALESTINE INTO JORDAN AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE MOMENT, DEPARTMENT REPLIED THAT INCORPORATION AT THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT WAS PREMATURE.

-- ON APRIL 24, 1950, OFFICIALS FROM THE BRITISH EMBASSY INFORMED DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS THAT THE BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE PLANNED TO ISSUE A DECLARATION RECOGNIZING THE UNION OF ARAB PALESTINE AND TRANSJORDAN AND STATING THE VIEW THAT THE

ANGLO-JORDAN TREATY APPLIED TO THE NEW TERRITORY. THE
FOREIGN OFFICE HOPED THE U.S. WOULD BE ABLE TO ISSUE A
DECLARATION OF APPROVAL OF THE UNION. IN RESPONSE,
DEPTOFF SAID THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN THINKING THAT
THE IDEAL SITUATION WOULD BE FOR THE UNION OF ARAB PALESTINE
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PAGE 08 STATE 056183

AND JORDAN TO TAKE PLACE IN THE CONTEXT OF A FINAL PEACE
SETTLEMENT, BUT WE HAD AN OPEN MIND AS REGARDS OTHER OCCA-
SIONS. UNILATERAL ACTION WAS NOT THE BEST METHOD BUT, IF
THAT COURSE WERE ADOPTED, WE HAD HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE
POSSIBLE FOR THE UNION TO TAKE PLACE QUIETLY, AS A SORT
OF PROLONGATION OF A DE FACTO SITUATION. HE ALSO
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-- ON APRIL 26, 1950, SECRETARY ACHESON MADE AMBIGUOUS
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-- ON APRIL 26, 1950, BRITISH EMBASSY AGAIN ASKED
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REPLIED THAT IT HAD BEEN GIVING THE MATTER SERIOUS THOUGHT,
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ALTHOUGH THE DEPARTMENT FAVORED THE INCLUSION OF CENTRAL
PALESTINE IN JORDAN AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME, IT FELT THAT
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WAS OF SUCH A CHARACTER AS TO MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR US TO
ANNOUNCE OFFICIAL AND PUBLIC APPROBATION. CHRISTOPHER

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PAGE 01 STATE 056183
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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 056183 SENT ACTION AMMAN MAR 04.

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 056183

FOR ATHERTON, USDEL

E.O. 11652: N/A

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PAGE 02 STATE 056183

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PAGE 03 STATE 056183

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PAGE 04 STATE 056183

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PAGE 05 STATE 056183

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ON PALESTINE. ARAB STATES ARE IN TEMPORARY MILITARY OCCUPATION OF PALESTINE. FIRST TASK OF GENERAL COMMITTEE IS TO FACE THIS SITUATION OF UNLAWFUL MILITARY OCCUPATION. ISRAELI DELEGATION WILL INSIST ON WITHDRAWAL OF ALL ARAB STATES. PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION SHOULD BE OBSERVED FOR ARAB PALESTINE. FUTURE OF ARAB PALESTINE SHOULD BE LEFT TO ITS INHABITANTS.

-- ON MAY 28, 1949, ISRAEL TOLD PCC THAT "ISRAEL WOULD ACCEPT PRESENT ARMISTICE LINE AS BOUNDARY WHETHER CENTRAL PALESTINE WAS GOVERNED BY TRANSJORDAN OR INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY. ISRAEL HAD NO AMBITIONS IN CENTRAL PALESTINE. ISRAEL PLANNED TO DISCUSS WITH FINAL ESTABLISHED AUTHORITY IN CENTRAL PALESTINE. ISRAELI ATTITUDE RE MODIFICATIONS WILL CHANGE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHARACTER OF GOVERNING AU-

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PAGE 07 STATE 056183

THORITY, I.E., WHETHER TRANSJORDAN, INDEPENDENT STATE, OR OTHER AUTHORITY. ISRAEL DID NOT WISH TO ADVANCE SUGGESTIONS RE ITS DISPOSITION. ISRAEL WISHED GIVE ALL INTERESTED INCLUDING ARAB STATES, ARAB INHABITANTS AND REFUGEES OPPORTUNITY TO DECIDE RE FUTURE STATUS OF CENTRAL PALESTINE.

-- IN REMARKS TO PCC ON JUNE 9, EYTAN SAID THAT ISRAEL ACCEPTED MAY 12 PROTOCOL AS BASIS FOR DISCUSSION. ISRAELI PRINCIPLE IS GA PRINCIPLE OF MUTUAL ADJUSTMENT OF BORDERS TO COMMON ADVANTAGE OF EACH PARTY BY FREE NEGOTIATION. ISRAEL CANNOT ACCEPT "PURELY ARBITRARY MATHEMATICAL PROPORTION OR FORMULA." PARTITION RESOLUTIONS OF NOVEMBER 29 ARE NOT SACROSANCT. ISRAEL IS NOT BOUND TO ADHERE. PARTITION WAS BASED ON PEACEFUL IMPLEMENTATION. WAR RESULTS. ONLY JEWISH STATE APPEARED. ARAB STATE DID NOT. ARABS ARE, HOWEVER, ENTITLED TO STATE. ISRAEL CANNOT AGREE THAT BECAUSE ARABS FAILED TO ESTABLISH STATE OTHER ARAB STATES ARE ENTITLED TO TERRITORY.....IF THERE WERE ARAB STATE ISRAEL'S TERRITORIAL POSITION WOULD NOW BE DIFFERENT. ISRAEL IS PREPARED, HOWEVER, TO DISCUSS ITS FRONTIERS WITH EACH OF ITS PRESENT NEIGHBORS.

-- ON OCTOBER 14, 1949, IN RESPONSE TO A BRITISH REQUEST FOR VIEWS REGARDING ASKING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO DIRECT THE PALESTINE CONCILIATION COMMISSION TO BRING ABOUT INCORPORATION OF ARAB PALESTINE INTO JORDAN AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE MOMENT, DEPARTMENT REPLIED THAT INCORPORATION AT THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT WAS PREMATURE.

-- ON APRIL 24, 1950, OFFICIALS FROM THE BRITISH EMBASSY INFORMED DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS THAT THE BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE PLANNED TO ISSUE A DECLARATION RECOGNIZING THE UNION OF ARAB PALESTINE AND TRANSJORDAN AND STATING THE VIEW THAT THE

ANGLO-JORDAN TREATY APPLIED TO THE NEW TERRITORY. THE FOREIGN OFFICE HOPED THE U.S. WOULD BE ABLE TO ISSUE A
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DECLARATION OF APPROVAL OF THE UNION. IN RESPONSE, DEPTOFF SAID THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN THINKING THAT THE IDEAL SITUATION WOULD BE FOR THE UNION OF ARAB PALESTINE AND JORDAN TO TAKE PLACE IN THE CONTEXT OF A FINAL PEACE SETTLEMENT, BUT WE HAD AN OPEN MIND AS REGARDS OTHER OCCASIONS. UNILATERAL ACTION WAS NOT THE BEST METHOD BUT, IF THAT COURSE WERE ADOPTED, WE HAD HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE UNION TO TAKE PLACE QUIETLY, AS A SORT

OF PROLONGATION OF A DE FACTO SITUATION. HE ALSO
STATED THAT HE SAW NO REASON FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO CHANGE
ITS POSITION REGARDING A U.S. DECLARATION ON THE UNION
QUESTION.

-- ON APRIL 26, 1950, SECRETARY ACHESON MADE AMBIGUOUS
PRESS STATEMENT SET OUT PARA ONE.

-- ON APRIL 26, 1950, BRITISH EMBASSY AGAIN ASKED
ABOUT U.S. POSITION ON ISSUING A DECLARATION. DEPARTMENT
REPLIED THAT IT HAD BEEN GIVING THE MATTER SERIOUS THOUGHT,
BUT REMAINED CONSTANT IN THE POSITION PREVIOUSLY GIVEN.
ALTHOUGH THE DEPARTMENT FAVORED THE INCLUSION OF CENTRAL
PALESTINE IN JORDAN AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME, IT FELT THAT
UNILATERAL ACTION TO THAT EFFECT BY THE JORDAN GOVERNMENT
WAS OF SUCH A CHARACTER AS TO MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR US TO
ANNOUNCE OFFICIAL AND PUBLIC APPROBATION. CHRISTOPHER UNQUOTE
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